

ASTER TATARICUS PLANT NAMED 'VIOLET LAKE'

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of *Aster tataricus* L. f., which was developed in a controlled breeding program in Kobuchizawa, Gumma Prefecture, Japan. The varietal denomination of the new variety is 'Violet Lake'.

The genus *Aster* is included in the family Compositae that comprises about 1,300 genera and 21,000 species of herbs, sometimes shrubs, or occasionally trees in tropics, mostly temperate in origin. *Aster* comprises approximately 250 species of mainly herbaceous perennials, though some annuals and biennials, originating in South America, Eurasia, Africa and Asia, many of which possess desirable ornamental characteristics.

Aster tataricus is an extremely variable clumping to rhizomatus perennial native to Japan, Korea, Manchuria, northern China, Mongolia and Siberia. It is typically about 2 meters tall.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new variety was discovered in a controlled breeding program and differs from its parents by its late spring to early summer bloom season, the distinct violet cast of its ray flowers and its compactness, reaching a mature height of 40 to 50 cms tall in flower. *Aster tataricus* 'Violet Lake' differs from *Aster tataricus* 'Blue Lake' by being 20% shorter, blooming two weeks later and violet flower color. Asexual reproduction of the new variety by division and flower stem cuttings, performed in Kobuchizawa, Gumma Prefecture, Japan have confirmed that the distinctive characteristics of the new variety are stable and transmitted to succeeding generations, and the new variety reproduces true to type.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTS

'Violet Lake' is distinguished from its parent and all other varieties of *Aster tataricus* of which I am aware by its spring to early summer bloom season, the distinct violet cast of its ray flowers and its compactness, reaching a mature height of 40 to 50 cms tall in flower.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATION

The accompanying illustration shows a specimen of the new cultivar in the photo illustration of the typical flower color as true to color as is reasonably possible to make in an illustration of this character.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW VARIETY

‘Violet Lake’ has not been observed under all possible environmental, cultural and light conditions. The following observations and descriptions are of plants grown in Kitakoma-gun, Yamanashi, Japan. In this description, color references are to the *Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart* (2001) and terminology used in the color descriptions herein refers to plate numbers in this color chart. Phenotypic expression may vary with light intensity, cultural and environmental conditions.

CLASSIFICATION:

	Botanical:	<i>Aster tataricus</i> L. ‘Violet Lake’
10	Propagation:	Division and flower stem cuttings
	Time to rooting:	Spring: About 21 days at a temperature of 21°C Winter: About 28 days at a temperature of 18°C
15	Rooting habit:	Fine, fibrous, well-branched
	Plant Description	
	Appearance:	Herbaceous perennial with mounded growth habit with upright flower stems. Freely and uniformly flowering; violet-colored inflorescences.
20	Size:	
	Height:	In flower, 40 to 50 cm; vegetative stage, 12 to 18 cm
	Width:	30 to 40 cm
25	Habit:	Mounding perennial, clumping to slightly rhizomatous, with a basal rosette of foliage and cauline leaves ascending the stems.
	Branching:	Leaves radiate from a stout caudex at or below the soil surface.

	Hardiness:	USDA Zone 4 (-30°F to -20°F)
	Growth Rate:	Moderate to vigorous
	Foliage Description	
	Shape:	Oblanceolate to spatulate
5	Apex:	Acute
	Base:	Attenuate
	Margin:	Irregularly dentate
	Leaf size:	
	Mature:	
10	Basal leaves:	6 to 7 cm wide; 12 to 30 cm long
	Cauline leaves:	2 to 17 cm long
	Juvenile:	2 to-3 cm wide; 6 to-7 cm long
	Arrangement:	Alternate on the stem, occasionally forming false whorls at the ends of shoots or subtending an inflorescence.
15	Substance:	Coreaceous
	Texture:	Bullate, especially the basal leaves; scabrous above and beneath, more scabrous above
	Color:	
20	Mature Foliage:	
	Upper Surface:	Near Green Group 136A-B
	Lower Surface:	Near Green Group 136A-B
	Young Foliage:	
	Upper Surface:	Near Yellow-Green Group 146A
25	Under Surface:	Near Yellow-Green Group 147C
	Venation	
	Pattern:	
	Upper and Lower Surfaces:	Alternately pinnate, occasionally opposite near base
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Color

New Foliage:

Upper Surface: near Yellow-Green Group
148B

Under Surface: near Yellow-Green Group
146B

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Mature Foliage:

Upper Surface: near Yellow-Green Group
148C

Under Surface: near Yellow-Green Group
146D

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Flower Description

Appearance:

Typical composite "daisy" flowers borne in a loose many-flowered corymb, the up-facing heads held on stiff peduncles, terminal and in leaf axils along the stem. disc and ray florets arranged acropetally on a capitulum.

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Flowering response:

Under natural conditions, plants flower from late spring through fall.

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Quantity of inflorescences:

Inflorescences form at every leaf axil. Freely flowering, usually about 65 to 80 inflorescences per plant.

Inflorescence size:

Diameter:

About 3 cm

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Depth (height):

About 1 cm

Disc diameter:

About 8 mm

Fragrance:

None

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Inflorescence bud:

Shape:	Ovoid
Length:	About 1 cm
Diameter:	About 5 mm
Color:	Near Purple Group N78C

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Ray florets

Quantity of ray florets/inflorescence: About 14 to 16 per inflorescence

Shape:	Elliptic
Apex:	Rounded
Base:	Attenuate
Margin:	Entire
Length:	About 1.2 to 1.6 cm
Width:	About 4 to 6 mm
Texture:	Satiny, smooth and glabrous
Color:	Near violet group N87B-C

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Disc florets

Quantity:	About 35 to 40 per inflorescence
Shape:	Tubular
Length:	About 6 mm
Width:	About 2 mm
Color:	Near Yellow Group 7C

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Sepals

Appearance:	Leaf-like
Quantity:	Several rows
Shape:	Linear
Texture:	Smooth
Color:	Near Green Group 139C

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Peduncle

Aspect:	Angled about 45°
Strength:	Strong

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Length:

Apical peduncle: About 2 cm

Fourth peduncle: About 5 cm

Seventh peduncle: About 6 cm

5 Texture: Coarse

Color: Near Green Group 138B

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Androecium Present on disc florets only

10 Pollen : Scarce

Pollen Color: Near Yellow Group 9B

Gynoecium Present on both ray and disc florets

Style Length: About 3mm

Stigma Color: Near Yellow Group 10C

15 Seed production: Seed production has not been observed.

Disease resistance: Plants of 'Violet Lake' have not been observed to be resistant to pathogens common to Asters.